

Message Text

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ACTION OES-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 COME-00 SMI-01 CEQ-01
L-03 IO-13 INT-05 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
EB-08 AGRE-00 /073 W
-----032596 191523Z /50

R 181555Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8186
INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EFIS, SENV, IWC-I, CY
SUBJECT: WHALING ACTIVITIES OF FISHING VESSEL SIERRA

REF: (A) STATE 196019; (B) NICOSIA 568 (NOTAL)

1. GOC MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS HAS INFORMED DIRECTOR OF FISHERIES THAT IT IS UNABLE SUSPEND SIERRA REGISTRATION BECAUSE SIERRA'S WHALING ACTIVITIES ARE NOT ILLEGAL UNDER CYPRIOT LAW. THE MINISTER HAS ASSURED HIM HOWEVER THAT "QUIET BUT FIRM PRESSURE" IS BEING PLACED ON LOCAL DIRECTORS OF COMPANY, SIERRA LTD., WHICH REGISTERED SHIP, TO VOLUNTARILY REMOVE IT FROM REGISTRY. DIRECTOR OF FISHERIES IS URGING GOC TO JOIN IWC SO THAT LEGAL BASIS WOULD EXIST FOR SANCTIONS AGAINST SIERRA.
2. RECORDS OF REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES SHOW THAT SIERRA IS OWNED BY LOCAL CYPRIOT COMPANY, SIERRA LTD. DIRECTORS ARE CHRYSISS DEMETRIADES (LAWYER SPECIALIZING

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IN SETTING UP OFF-SHORE COMPANIES) AND EFTI PSILLAKI WHO IS ALSO SHAREHOLDER (ONE SHARE). ONLY OTHER SHAREHOLDER IS YIANNAKIS AGAPIOU WITH 99 SHARES. ALL ARE CYPRIOT. SHIP IS REPORTEDLY MORTGAGED TO AN UNIDENTIFIED NORWEGIAN BANK FOR \$400,000. THERE IS ALSO SOME KIND OF CLAIM ON SHIP FOR "CURRENT ACCOUNT" EXPENSES BY CONTINUITY SHIPPING CORP. OF PANAMA. NO

OTHER OWNERSHIP INFORMATION AVAILABLE.

3. IN CORRESPONDENCE THROUGH DEMETRIADES, SIERRA'S ACTUAL OWNERS ADMITTED TO MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS THAT THEY ARE WHALING IN ATLANTIC IN WHAT THEY CLAIM ARE UNRESTRICTED AREAS "30 DEGREES SOUTH AND 40 DEGREES NORTH". X THEY FURTHER CLAIM THEY HAVE NOT VIOLATED ANY NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL LAWS OR REGULATIONS GOVERNING WHALING. IN RESPONSE MINISTRY REQUESTED IN JULY THAT SIERRA'S OWNERS SUBMIT DETAILED INFORMATION ON THEIR ACTIVITIES (NUMBER AND TYPE OF WHALES TAKEN, AREAS WHALED, ETC.). NO REPLY HAS BEEN RECEIVED. IF ONE IS FORTHCOMING MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAVE PROMISED TO PASS IT ON TO EMBASSY.

4. COMMENT: DIRECTOR OF FISHERIES IS FAIRLY CONFIDENT THAT MINISTRY PRESSURE ON CYPRIOT PARTICIPANTS IN SIERRA LTD. WILL RESULT IN SIERRA EVENTUALLY BEING REMOVED FROM REGISTRY. IT MIGHT BE USEFUL HOWEVER FOR DEPARTMENT TO SUGGEST THAT IWC CONTACT GOC DIRECTLY TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF GOC JOINING IWC. THIS WOULD MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON GOC TO ACT AS WELL AS PROVIDE GOC WITH ADDITIONAL LEVERAGE IN DEALING WITH SIERRA.
END COMMENT.
STONE

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